

MINUTES

COUNCIL ON RECYCLING
APRIL 26, 2005
BOARDROOM
ALLIANT ENERGY CENTER
1919 ALLIANT ENERGY CENTER WAY
MADISON, WISCONSIN

Council Members Present: Neil Peters-Michaud; John Piotrowski; John Reindl; Cecelia Stencil; William Swift; Charlotte Zieve (by phone)

Council Members Absent: Jeff Fielkow.

Also attending: Jason Johns, Tenuta and Associates; Cynthia Moore, DNR; Joe Van Rossum, UW-Ext, Solid and Hazardous Waste Education Center.

Call To Order: The meeting was called to order by Chair John Reindl at 9:05 AM

Introduction and Announcements: John Reindl said that he sent a letter in support of the recycling rule to the Natural Resources Board and spoke to the Assembly committee it was referred to. There was no opposition to the rule at the hearing. Cynthia Moore said that there was no objection to the rule and the DNR was going ahead with implementation.

Reindl said that another DNR rule on landfill design was very controversial. There are three main parts. One is to allow leachate lines to go from 1200' to 2000'. Another provision involves long term liability. Currently the operators are responsible for the landfill in perpetuity but only have to have a fund for 40 years. DNR wants to provide for perpetual financial assurance. The other aspect is organic stability. You would have to find ways to keep material out of the landfill, free process it or process it in site to accelerate decomposition. The goal is to have organics decompose within 30 years. The NR Board OK'd the leachate lines and said that the other two aspects must come to the Board by February 2006. The NR Board also wants a comprehensive solid waste management plan. They felt that they were doing this piecemeal and wanted a plan by March 2007. No one from the solid waste industry testified before the Board.

Reindl distributed articles on mercury, school trash sorts and computer recycling featuring council member Neil Peters-Michaud.

Minutes: Approval of the Minutes of February 9, 2005. Cecelia Stencil moved, Neil Peters-Michaud seconded. Minutes approved without amendment.

Reports

DNR: Cynthia Moore, DNR, said the recycling rules were going forward. The DNR is developing guidance for hauler notification and compliance assurance. They are also developing an outreach plan.

DNR is in the middle of their annual reporting process for recycling by the RU's. The annual report is now online and many RU's are using it. The early feedback is that people like using the system. SHWEC has been a big help in putting the system together.

Moore said there is no information on whether or not the budget will impact the recycling program.

Moore talked next about the Governor's Task Force on Solid Waste, Waste Materials Recovery and Disposal. The Executive Order will be out in a few weeks and the governor will appoint the 15 task force members soon after that. The task force will have until December 2006 to deliver their recommendations. Moore said she will keep Council members informed of the progress. There will be a lot of opportunities for public input. The task force will incorporate the requests of the Natural Resources Board for the department to develop a comprehensive strategy for this area. Moore said that she has a list of groups they will send to the Governor for possible inclusion. The list will include a member of the Council.

Moore said that Milwaukee and Waukesha counties were awarded a ReMix grant to stimulate the recycling of magazines and catalogs. The Governor's support was crucial in securing the grant from the coalition that includes Time, Inc and International Papers. The pilot project is to increase the amount of magazine and catalog recycling in the two counties. She said that there should be a residual effect on all paper recycling. Moore said another effort is under way to work with the Paper Council to increase the quality and quantity of paper recycling in Wisconsin.

Used Oil Filters and Absorbents- Bill Swift said that the committee is almost finished and that Commerce is working on the final document. The plan will probably be to the legislature by June. Reindl said the numbers were staggering- 55.9 million pounds of oil absorbents being used in Wisconsin each year. Of that, less than 3% is being recycled. Swift said there is enormous waste here. The whole thing can be recycled and it should. Dan Fields, DNR, distributed a draft copy of the recommendations. He said the committee set a goal of 60% (from the current 30%) for used oil filter by July 1, 2008 and a goal of 40% (from the current <3%) by 2018 for used oil absorbents. If those numbers are not met then the committee suggests that a ban go into effect. Reindl asked if any legislators were interested in this issue. Fields said that this study was asked for by the legislature and that Sen. Harsdorf and Rep. Ott appeared most interested. John Piotrowski asked what types of absorbents were out there. Swifts said granular and cloth/ragstock. Piotrowski said that his company may be interested in switching to ragstock and using it in their boilers. Reindl said that if some is burned for energy recovery it should count in the recovery rate. Swift said he would pass that on to Commerce. Reindl asked about education. Swift said that the committee did not discuss who would pay for the education. Reindl said this has been a ten-year effort to get to this point.

Other Priority Issues:

Paper: Piotrowski said he did some research at his own mill and asked what materials are prohibited. The list is quite long. Some materials are on the list because of health or safety reasons and others because of contaminants. Many OCC bales have trash in the middle of the bales. There are also problems with OCC from China. China uses a very low quality fiber that John's mill is unable to use for recycling. There is a need to increase both the paper recycling rate and quality. Problems happen when companies like Wal-Mart make bales sandwiched together as cardboard/plastic/cardboard. The paper industry cannot accept those types of bales because the plastic is a contaminant. Source separated is the best for the mills. The value of plastic has gone from \$.03 to \$.23/lb. That makes it valuable enough to separate and sell. Competition from India and China for supply is creating shortages of recyclable fiber in the US. Because of their lower labor rates, they can pay more for material. A higher recycling rate would help everyone. Moore said that DNR is trying to increase quality but it would still be a blip on international screen. She said that small companies are not able to reject loads as easily as the larger companies because they don't have the market power. Piotrowski said there is no incentive for the brokers to change because they can sell it to China. Reindl said printing companies should look at what type of advertising they put into their publications (Tyvek samples, CD's etc).

Piotrowski said that adhesives are the major problem they face. The Post Office has a new glue for their stamps that is supposed to resolve some of those issues.

Peters-Michaud asked about state procurement guidelines. Reindl said that the guidelines are in place but there is no oversight to ensure that they are followed.

Piotrowski said that the recycling markets are a global issue. He hoped that the solid waste task force would have representation from the paper industries. There is a need to show the average person what can be done at a personal level to make recycling successful. We need to create innovative solutions that deliver high quality recycled material at a reasonable cost. Swift said we need to start in the schools to get the message across. Peters-Michaud says that manufacturers must take responsibility for their packaging. Moore said DNR willing to take the lead in this area.

Electronics: Peters-Michaud said that the EPA had a workgroup meeting with 200 stakeholders. The main topics were setting up a clearinghouse, sponsored by Polymer Alliance Zone, American Plastic Council and the National Center for Electronics Recycling. They have some pilot programs. One is a third party organization in the northeast. A charge is collected at the point of sale. The charge is for anything with a screen. Peters-Michaud said that this could be a good model. There is also a pilot program in the Pacific-Northwest as well. There are some outreach and education efforts. They are working on coordination of programs. There was a lot of debate on electronics recycler certification. There are several competing certification programs. It does not look like any one group will become the standard soon. The only reason a company should get certified is to get more business. That is the only motivation. Peters-Michaud said that certification did cover downstream companies. Swift said that he supports certification but there should be one standard. Peters-Michaud said that one problem with state certification is that the state could be liable if something goes wrong. He said there is also a difference between a pledge and a certification. Reindl asked about ISO 14000. Peters-Michaud said it is good but not a deal breaker. The certification does not guarantee anything. He said that companies are worried about their liability. There is a desire for standards but unlikely to be a national standard.

Peters-Michaud said that California has instituted an Advanced Recycling Fee (ARF). Reindl said that the province of Alberta has a program that charges an ARF. They charge \$5 for a laptop and up to \$45 for a big screen TV. The program has support as long as people are confident that the money is going to be used for recycling the equipment. Peters-Michaud said that EPA is doing research but not actually leading the issue. Legislation has been introduced but there is no support from the administration through EPA. The Department of Commerce is also working on this issue. Many groups are involved. California is leading. 1 in 9 computers ends up in California, so whatever they do will have a national effect. Minnesota is considering moving the landfill ban back 1 year because they are not ready to handle everything.

Moore said that Sen. Miller is drafting legislation and will introduce it soon. It appears to be on the producer responsibility model. He will be speaking to the Public Works Conference on May 12th. It may be ready by then. Moore said that Rep. Vos is also interested in introducing legislation on electronics. His approach would be a more voluntary program. Clearly, there is growing interest in this issue.

Peters-Michaud said that no national legislation is comprehensive. The manufacturers are split as well. Some want producer responsibility, some fees and some take-backs.

Reindl said that the Council is an advisory body. If something new comes up, the Council should weigh in but that the Council is not a lobbying organization.

Construction & Demolition: Peters-Michaud said several groups were working on the issue. WasteCap is developing guidelines for the state. It would be a model and a template for building. Good way for state to lead. He said that he is building a warehouse and very few builders do green building for warehouse/industrial facilities. This template could help a lot. Hauler notification could be a major impact in this area. Many resources have been created.

Peters-Michaud said that demolition efforts, such as the toolkit from Madison Environmental Group, will be very good resources. They include a searchable database with forms, etc. He said there is a lot of momentum out there. Moore said that the Wisconsin Builders Association has approached the DNR about a Green Tier project. She also said that DNR is developing guidelines for exemptions for drywall if you follow certain procedures. Stencil said that WasteCap is working with a company in Ladysmith on this issue. Reindl said that there is a lot of momentum. Concrete and asphalt are being recycled at rates that no one believed would happen. Joe Van Rossum, SHWEC, said that WasteCap has a template letters on low level hazardous waste exemptions for wood and drywall. Moore said that DNR has applied for a grant from EPA to develop a tracking project on this material. Reindl suggested that Kim McCutcheon, DNR come to the Council and talk about this issue. We can discuss barriers that the Council can help with.

Annual Report: Will send out in the next few weeks.

Mercury in Products: No report.

Public Comment: None.

Other Business

The next Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 21, 2005 at 9:00 AM at the US Oil offices, 558 Carter Court, Kimberly.

The following meeting is scheduled for 9:00 AM on Tuesday, August 23, 2004 at a site to be determined. Topics may include adhesives and the used oil issues. A tour of Forest Products Laboratory to get an update on adhesives was suggested.

Adjournment: Zieve moved and Stencil seconded. The Council adjourned at 11:30 AM.

Respectfully submitted by Daniel B. Fields, Department of Natural Resources.